The Exciter

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DX NOTES

One of the hardest things about work DX is learning how to get started. Assuming that you are able to work stations in all parts of the U.S.; there is no reason why you can't contact many DX stations as well. You need to know when and where to listen for the DX stations, and perhaps most important of all, you must know where the DX station is listening. This knowledge and persistence will result in many DX QSO's.

First lets consider the matter of where and when to listen for DX. Twenty Meters is the prime DX band. Any time that it is open there are usually DX signals coming through. The best hours are those between 6:30 and 9:30 in the morning, and 4:30 to 10:30 in the evenings. If you operate SSB, the best clue to DX in the American part of the phone band will be the hiss and splatter of a big pile up on the DX stations frequency. This is a chaotic situation at best; and since most DX stations may legally work fone from 14100 to 14350; they tend to migrate outside the American part of the band so that they can be heard. The SSB DX is concentrated between 14100 and 14140, by habit; and the AM DX stations gather in the 14140 to 14200 area. Many times, the DX stations just listen on their own frequency, never tuning the American fone band. Calling these stations may be good chin exercise, but it nets precious few QSO's. There's nothing you can do but be patient and keep listening. Sooner or later you will hear a DX station announce that he is tuning the upper portion of the band, or else you will hear him already in contact with a W. Now the trick is to find what frequency the DX station is tuned to. Sometimes he will announce it; otherwise you must search the American portion of the band to try to find the station he is working. This isn't easy; and is sometimes not even possible due to skip; but if you can find the spot the DX station is tuned to; all that remains is to call him on or near that frequency when he completes his QSO.

DX on CW comes easier. The DX stations nearly always listen within 5 kc of their own frequency. Just slide in there and call when the time comes. The most common mistake on CW is zero-beating the DX station. Experienced DX station operators never answer zero-beat calls because they know this promptly creates a pile-up right on top of them; and they cannot be heard by anyone. So they generally tune up or down 2 to 5 kcs from their own frequency; and if a pile-up grows; they normally tune even further away from their own frequency. There is a great temptation to zero-beat the W station that is working DX so that you will be on the spot when the DX listens for another call. The trouble here is that several dozen other W's have usually done the same thing; and the DX operator is unable to copy any of you. A more productive process is to call about half a KC above or below the frequency last listened to by the DX station; better results being obtained if you call on the side away from the DX stations frequency. This technique of calling DX just above or just above or just below the station who last worked him is also a good idea on phone - the exception being a DX station using transceive of course.

Lastly, there is no substitute for perseverance when it comes to DX'ing. Many call, but few are chosen. Or more accurately, you will have to call many before you snag that rare one, and you will probably have to call that rare one dozens of times at that. But therein lies the challenge and fun of DX, if it were too easy it wouldn't be half the fun.

73 & DX
Len, W5LGG

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The editorials and articles by contributing editors represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the members of the San Antonio Radio Club or its officers.

VHF AND UP

For the past five years, except for a few issues, this column has appeared regularly in the EXCITER. During the exciting years of high MUF when cross-continent and trans-oceanic contacts at 50 mc were an almost daily occurrence, this column contained details of many fine accomplishments performed by the San Antonio area VHF amateurs. The era of the earth satellites produced another spurt of activity which listed for years. And each season of sporadic E and transequatorial scatter brought forth additional unique facts which local hams had done. These details were often made known to propagation authorities across the country as copies of the EXCITER became available to them.

As time has gone by, however, and the solar activity has decreased to an extremely low value, things no longer sizzle in the VHF area as they did in days past. We no longer gaze for hours on end in the evenings looking for the friendly flashing of Echo. This is all too common-place now. The signals from the satellites are too complex and uninteresting to most of us now. Only a few local hams were impressed by their own accomplishments of the Oscar's. Time had gone ahead faster than their interests had.

People's interests wax and wane as do the sun spots. And so does activity reporting. You writer has hopefully reported of important and interesting events, which were accomplished locally and country-wide. Further information for continuing this column is not easily available. Rather than continue and not report significant facts, the writer feels that this column should be discontinued under this title.

Your writer has enjoyed the opportunity of writing these last five years. The reward has been in the form of sincere comments from respected readers. Perhaps as time progresses our art and we with it, material will emerge and appear in a new column. These final comments are being written from Frankfurt and London. Regards to all for now.

Cal Graf, W5LFM

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WITH THE BEXAR COUNTY AREC

On August 17th and 18th we had an opportunity to check out our club station equipment in a prolonged net operation. The San Antonio Radio Club and 6 Meter Club combined efforts to furnish communications for the Telethon for Cerebral Palsy.

We learned a few things during the operation and hope we can improve our operating efficiency for future situations.

We extend our thanks to Oscar WA5EJB, Bob WA5CJG, Bob K5AUW, Bob K5PFE, Thad W5IRQ, Leonard K5IEG, Dean W5BGE, Joe K5HRF, Sid K5UBP, Roy K5COV, Sal K5WJR, Mark WA5GSW, and Louis WA5EUU for their work at the Auditorium and at W5SC.

Bob K5UWS, Katharine K5TSZ and Ed K5LZP did outstanding relay work.

Bob W5RSD, George W5KCZ and Earl K5YNS didn't do much operating but we are grateful for their presence, and assistance at the station. Thanks to Roger WN5HDB for the use of the portable TV receiver and to Thad W5IRQ for the coffee maker.

Sid W5KLW operated portable from Schertz and did a fine job. Other stations who participated and their locations are: Charles W5BRC, Kenedy; Charles W5CL, Devine; Bob W4ANZ/5, San Antonio; Virgil

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All in all it was a very successful operation, even though 40 meters was inoperable.

We're going to try it again during our Simulated Emergency Test coming up soon. See you then.

73,
E. L. Ulrey, K5HZR
Emergency Coordinator
San Antonio Bexar County

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FROM THE EDITORS

The EXCITER has been published by the San Antonio Radio Club for the benefit of all amateurs in the South Texas area. We hope that it has been of some interest to all of its readers.

If we are to continue publication, we must receive new and continued advertising. Since there is no charge for the EXCITER, advertising is the only means of meeting cost of publication.

We would like to continue with more items of interest to you and issue a better EXCITER. We solicit your suggestions. If you know of someone or some business that might need advertising and might be interested, drop a card to the Advertising Manager, The Exciter, Box 62, San Antonio 6, Texas. If you would like to run a small ad yourself, let us know.

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